<u>**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**</u>

The following listing, if entered, replaces all prior versions of the claims in the present application.

1. (**Currently Amended**) A <u>**computer-implemented**</u> method comprising:

receiving a request to reserve a function space for use on a future date, <u>**using a processor,**</u> wherein

 the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

storing availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for a category, and a set of pricing rules**,** <u>**using the processor**</u>;

defining the category, <u>**using the processor,**</u> wherein

 the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function spaces,

 the subset of function spaces comprises the function space, and

 each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or more similar attributes;

assigning a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function spaces, <u>**using the processor,**</u> wherein

 each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

determining an availability of the each of the function spaces in the category on the future date, <u>**using the processor,**</u> wherein

 the determining is based upon some or all of the availability information and one or more of the plurality of criteria;

determining whether the function spaces in the category that satisfy the one or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date**,** <u>**using the processor**</u>;

if none of the function spaces is available on the future date, accessing the authorization level for the category, <u>**using the processor,**</u> wherein

the authorization level indicates a number of overbookings that are

allowed for the category on the future date;

determining whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the authorization

level and a number of existing reservations for the subset of function

spaces on the future date**, using the processor**;

if the overbooking is allowed, automatically providing a real-time price quote for

the function space based on the set of pricing rules-and the threshold

revenue value assigned to the function space**, using the processor**;

receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote from a user**, using the

processor**;

overbooking a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance,

using the processor, wherein

the overbooking comprises accepting a reservation for the category space

for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces

in the category are currently determined to be available on the

future date; and

subsequent to the overbooking, mapping the category space to a specific function

space in the category, **using the processor,** wherein

the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of

criteria, and

the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a

cancellation made subsequent to the overbooking.

2.   (Cancelled)

3.   (**Currently Amended**) The **computer-implemented** method of claim 1, wherein

the plurality of ~~properties~~ **function spaces** are individual hotels of a hotel chain**,**
the set of pricing rules comprises
        at least one generic pricing rule, and
        at least one property-specific pricing rule, and
the at least one property-specific pricing rule is specific to one of the plurality
        of properties.

4-5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (**Currently Amended**) The **computer-implemented** method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a rejection of the real-time price quote from the user; and
providing a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-
        time, in response to the receiving the rejection, wherein
        the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

7.   (**Currently Amended**) The **computer-implemented** method of claim 6, wherein the determining whether the overbooking is allowed further comprises:

maximizing revenue generated by the overbooking by
        defining the category using one or more category-related criteria of the
                plurality of criteria , and
        selecting one or more of the pricing rules for use in the automatically
                providing the real-time price quote.

8.   (**Currently Amended**) The **computer-implemented** method of claim 7, wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.

9.   (Previously Presented) A tangible machine-readable storage medium that provides executable instructions that, when executed by a processor, cause the processor:

receive a request to reserve a function space for use on a future date, wherein

the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

store availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of

properties, an authorization level for a category, and a set of pricing rules;

define a category, wherein

the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function spaces,

the subset of function spaces comprises the function space, and

each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or more

similar attributes;

assign a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function spaces,

wherein

each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of

revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

determine an availability of the each of the function spaces in the category on the

future date based upon some or all of the availability information and one

or more of the plurality of criteria;

determine whether the function spaces in the category that satisfy the one or more

of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category,-if none of the function spaces is

available on the future data,, wherein

the authorization level indicates a number of overbookings that are

allowed for the category on the future date;

determine whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the authorization

level and a number of existing reservations for the subset of function

spaces on the future date;

automatically provide a real-time price quote for the function space based on a set

of pricing rules and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function

space if the overbooking is allowed;

receive an acceptance of the real time price quote from a user;

overbook a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance, wherein

overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation for the

category space for use on the future date even though none of the

function spaces in the category are currently determined to be

available on the future date; and

subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category space to a

specific function space in the category, wherein

the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of

criteria, and

the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation

made subsequent to the category space being overbooked.

10.   (Cancelled)

11.   (**Currently Amended**) The machine-readable medium of claim 9,

wherein

the plurality of ~~properties~~ **function spaces** are individual hotels of a hotel chain**,**

the set of pricing rules comprises

at least one generic pricing rule, and

at least one property-specific pricing rule, and

the at least one property-specific pricing rule is specific to one of the plurality

of properties.

12-13. (Cancelled)

14.   (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the executable instructions are further configured to:

receive a rejection of the real-time price quote from the user; and

provide a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-time,

in response to receipt of the rejection, wherein

the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

15.   (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the category is defined by one or more category-related criteria.

16.   (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.

17.   (Previously Presented) A system comprising:

a central data processing system having a memory device, the memory device

having stored thereon: availability information for a plurality of function

spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for a category,

and a set of pricing rules;

the central data processing system having a processor configured to:

receive a request to reserve a function space for use on a future date,

wherein

the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

define the category, wherein

the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function spaces,

the subset of function spaces comprise the function space, and

each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or

more similar attributes;

assign a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function

spaces, wherein

each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount

of revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

determine an availability of the each of the function spaces in the category

on the future date based upon some or all of availability

information and one or more of the plurality of criteria;

determine whether the function spaces in the category that satisfy the one

or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category, if none of the function

spaces is available on the future date,, wherein

the authorization level indicates a number of overbookings that are

allowed for the category on the future date;

determine whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the

authorization level and a number of existing reservations for the

subset of function spaces on the future date;

automatically provide a real-time price quote for the function space based

on a set of pricing rules and the threshold revenue value assigned

to the function space, if the overbooking is allowed;

receive an acceptance of the real time price quote from a user;

overbook a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance,

wherein

overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation

for the category space for use on the future date even

though none of the function spaces in the category are

currently determined to be available on the future date; and

subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category

space to a specific function space in the category, wherein

the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality

of criteria, and

the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a

cancellation made subsequent to the category space being

overbooked.

18.   (Cancelled)

19.   (**Currently Amended**) The system of claim 17, wherein
the plurality of ~~properties~~ **function spaces** are individual hotels of a hotel chain**,**
the set of pricing rules comprises
        at least one generic pricing rule, and
        at least one property-specific pricing rule, and
the at least one property-specific pricing rule is specific to one of the plurality
        of properties.

20-21. (Cancelled)

22.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the central digital
processing system is further configured to:
    receive a rejection of the real-time price quote;
        and
    provide an alternative to the request in real-time, in response to receipt of the
        rejection, wherein
        the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

23.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 22, wherein the category is
defined by one or more category-related criteria.

24.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the category-
related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of
attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.

25.   (**Currently Amended**) The **computer-implemented** method of claim 1,
wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group consisting of date,
day-part, and supplementary sales.

26. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group consisting of date, day-part, and supplementary sales.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the plurality of criteria is selected from a group consisting of date, day-part, and supplementary sales.

28.-32. (Cancelled)

33. (**Currently Amended**) A **computer-implemented** method comprising:
receiving a request for a function space in a particular-category, **using a**
      processor, wherein
      the request comprises a plurality of criteria,
      the plurality of criteria comprises a ranking of facility quality;
storing availability information for a plurality of function spaces in a common
      reservation table, **using the processor,** wherein
      the common reservation table concurrently stores information related to an
            inventory of the plurality of function spaces,
      the plurality of function spaces is represented by a corresponding plurality
            of category spaces,
      each of the category spaces represents a non-specific unit of function
            space in the particular category,
      each of the non-specific units of function space in the particular category
            has one or more similar attributes,
      each of the plurality of function spaces is a specific space located at one of
            a plurality of properties;
storing a set of pricing rules, **using the processor,** wherein
      the pricing rules comprise rules for pricing the function space based on a
            time of year;
defining the particular category**, using the processor**;

assigning a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function

spaces, **using the processor,** wherein

each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of

revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

determining an availability of the each of the plurality of function spaces, **using**

the processor, wherein

the determining is based upon some or all of the availability information

and one or more of the plurality of criteria,

the determining is contingent on the threshold revenue value assigned to

the function space,

the threshold revenue value comprises an expected food and drink revenue

associated with the request and revenue derived from an expected

number of sleeping room rentals associated with the request, and

the threshold revenue value is determined based on a day part for which

the function space is requested;

automatically providing a real-time price quote for the request based on the set of

pricing rules and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function

space, **using the processor,** wherein

in response to having determined that a requested function space satisfying

the plurality of criteria is unavailable, an alternative to the

requested function space is presented,

the alternative is selected as a closest approximation to the request,

the alternative is selected based on being fully available,

the pricing rules comprise general pricing rules and property-specific

pricing rules, and

the real-time price quote includes a pricing discount based on an

attendance of an event, profit for one or more expected guest room

rentals, and an expected profit on food and drink sales;

in response to a user rejecting the real time price quote, presenting the alternative**,**

       using the processor;

receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote from a user**, using the**

       processor;

establishing a reservation for one of the category spaces allocated for a length of

       time including a setup period and teardown period, **using the processor,**

       wherein

              the length of time is determined in response to a selected setup style and

                     the attendance; and

converting the reservation for the one of the category spaces to a reservation for

       one of the function spaces in the particular category**, using the processor**.